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# Security Council

Sixty-eighth year

*Provisional*

**6899**th meeting
Friday, 11 January 2013, 10 a.m.
New York

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| *President:* | Mr. Masood Khan | (Pakistan) |
| *Members:* | Argentina | Mr. Estreme |
| | Australia | Mr. Quinlan |
| | Azerbaijan | Mr. Musayev |
| | China | Mr. Wang Min |
| | France | Mr. Briens |
| | Guatemala | Mr. Rosenthal |
| | Luxembourg | Ms. Lucas |
| | Morocco | Mr. Loulichki |
| | Republic of Korea | Mr. Kim Sook |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Iliichev |
| | Rwanda | Mr. Nduhungirehe |
| | Togo | Mr. Menan |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Mr. Shearman |
| | United States of America | Ms. Finerty |

## Agenda

The situation in the Central African Republic

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic and on the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in that country (S/2012/956)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

**Expression of welcome to new members and of thanks to outgoing members of the Council**

**The President**: As this is the first formal meeting of the Security Council this year, I would like to extend my warm wishes for a very fruitful new year to all members of the Security Council, the Secretariat and the United Nations as a whole.

On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to the new members Argentina, Australia, Luxembourg, the Republic of Korea and Rwanda. We look forward to their participation in the work of the Council. Their experience and wisdom will be of invaluable assistance in the discharge of the Council's responsibilities.

I take this opportunity to express the Council's gratitude to the outgoing members — Columbia, Germany, India, Portugal and South Africa — for their important contributions to the work of the Council during their terms in 2011 and 2012.

**Expression of thanks to the retiring President**

**The President**: I take this opportunity to pay tribute on behalf of the Council to His Excellency Mr. Mohammed Loulichki, Permanent Representative of Morocco, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of December 2012. I am sure I speak for all members of the Council when I express my deep appreciation to Ambassador Loulichki and his team for the great diplomatic skill with which they conducted the Council's business last month.

**Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

**The situation in the Central African Republic**

**Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic and on the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in that country (S/2012/956)**

**The President**: Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Central African Republic to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Margaret Vogt, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic, and Ms. Zainab Hawa Bangura, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I wish to welcome Ms. Vogt, who is participating in today's meeting via video teleconference from Libreville.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2012/956, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic and on the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in that country.

I now give the floor to Ms. Vogt.

**Ms. Vogt**: Allow me to begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council, as well as for following up with us and for the many phone calls you have made to us to find out how we are doing and how the mission is handling the crisis that we have been experiencing. I would also like to thank the Council for its attention to the situaiton in the Central African Republic, especially since the eruption of conflict at the beginning of December 2012.

The report before the Security Council (S/2012/956) builds on the previous report (S/2012/374) of 29 May 2012, and provides an update on political, security, socioeconomic, humanitarian and human rights developments in the Central African Republic. It also details the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA) in support of the Government's peace-consolidation efforts, in accordance with the mandate entrusted to it by the Security Council.

Since the report was issued, on 21 December 2012, events have unfolded in the Central African Republic that have had a great impact on the social, political and security situation in the country and have significantly constrained the ability of United Nations agencies and programmes to do their work. A coalition made up of elements of four rebel groups launched an offensive against the Government on 10 December, occupying

a number of towns in the north, north-east and north-central parts of the Central African Republic.

The reporting period witnessed some significant and positive developments, including the following: the electoral code was revised and a permanent elections-management body was approved by consensus, which is a task that we struggled to achieve for a long time; the Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix (CPJP) acceded to the 2008 Libreville Comprehensive Peace Agreement, paving the way for the conduct of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process in the north-east, funding for which was made available by the European Union in July 2012; and the Government concluded an agreement with the International Monetary Fund that lifted the restriction on external funding and enabled the flow of donor support, which had been blocked for about three years. Unfortunately, those positive achievements were undermined by the resumption of conflict, wish some rebel groups launching a series of attacks against a number of towns in the north-east.

On 12 December, the Convention patriotique pour le salut du Kodro, the Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix, a faction of the CPJP that calls itself Fundamental CPJP and a faction of the Union des forces démocratiques pour le rassemblement established the "Séléka" coalition, which was later joined later by the Front démocratique du peuple centrafricain of Abdoulaye Miskine. The Séléka coalition took control of a number of towns, without much resistance from the national army. The failure of the army to repel that aggression is indicative of the depth of decay within the armed forces. The army had lost cohesion and the will to fight; many of the soldiers simply dropped their weapons and melted into the bush. Within a few weeks almost half of the prefectures in the territory had come under rebel control.

The leaders of the subregion responded very quickly to the series of crises confronting the Central African Republic. On 17 December, President Idriss Deby Itno of Chad deployed troops to the Central African Republic as an interposition force, supposedly to prevent the rebels from expanding beyond Sibut, which is located at a strategic juncture to Bangui and is a crossroads to many other parts of the country. The new Chadian contingent, which was supposed to have been brought under the control of the Mission de Consolidation de la Paix of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (MICOPAX), was unable to prevent the rebels from taking Sibut. Heads of State of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (ECCAS) met in N'Djamena on 21 December in an extraordinary session at which they decided to reactivate the follow-up committee for the Libreville Comprehensive Peace Agreement and to facilitate peace talks in Libreville among the Government, rebel leaders and the political opposition — talks that were supposed to be moderated by President Denis Soussou N'Guesso of the Republic of Congo.

Unfortunately, the N'Djamena summit was followed by another rebel overrun of the town of Damara, which is only 75 kilometres from Bangui. For the United Nations Sibut was the red line for our security guarantee. The security management team had designed a contingency plan that would enable the United Nations to evacuate families from the Central African Republic in a reasonable time. The Council will recall that Bangui is a family duty station, so there are many children and families in Bangui. The calculation of the team was that it would take an attacking force about five to six hours to get to Bangui from Sibut, leaving us with enough time to mobilize prepositioned air assets and to assemble families. However, when the rebels decided to overrun Damara, on 29 December, and following indications from the national security forces that they would not be in a position to guarantee our security, the entire United Nations system, the African Union (AU) and international non-governmental organizations had no choice but to evacuate their staff from the Central African Republic. We evacuated members of staff and families upon the attack on Sibut, with the remaining staff members being evacuated on 29 December following the overrun of Damara.

ECCAS heads of State then decided to deploy forces to Bangui to reinforce MICOPAX and help defend the city. Troops from Cameroon, the Congo, Gabon and a new Chadian contingent were deployed within two days over the New Year holidays. We consider that to be a real record. The Government also requested the support of troops from South Africa, about 400 of whom were deployed, while the French deployed extra forces, increasing their presence in Bangui to 600 troops.

We believe that the decision of the international community to pull out its personnel drove home to the regional leaders the critical security challenges in the Central African Republic and the need to take concrete steps to secure Bangui. It should be recalled that MICOPAX had drawn down its forces to training and

police contingents in anticipation of a final pull-out that was envisaged for 2013. MICOPAX has since changed its mandate, providing its newly deployed troops with a mandate to aggressively defend their positions, and Bangui in particular, and has halted plans to pull out of the Central African Republic.

Following the N'Djamena decision and the decision to launch peace talks in Libreville, I embarked on an intensive diplomatic effort, together with my African Union colleague, to engage with the parties, the Government, the rebel groups, the political parties and civil society members. I travelled to Brazzaville on two occasions to consult with President Sassou Nguesso on how he wanted to structure the peace talks in Libreville. I offered the President the full technical support of the United Nations, as well as our political advice. I also briefed and consulted with the Cameroonian authorities on options for resolving the conflict in the Central African Republic.

These efforts were warmly welcomed, and a coordination team was created in the Congolese Foreign Ministry to manage the mediation efforts of the Presidents. On my second trip to Libreville, I was accompanied by mediation experts from the United Nations standby mediation team — who have remained with us — and by staff officers, as well as the representative of the AU Commission. The United Nations team helped to structure the mediation, advised on the process, helped to draft a declaration of principles and a draft ceasefire agreement, and helped to prepare other analytical documents.

BINUCA worked closely with the ECCAS team that was deployed to Bangui from 27 December to 7 January to prepare for the talks and to manage the deployment of the ECCAS forces. We facilitated their contacts with the rebels in the region, with the Government, the opposition, political parties and civil society. BINUCA was also requested to airlift rebel groups from the Central African Republic province of Bria, N'Djamena and Yaoundé to Libreville. United Nations staff officers were also requested to support the ECCAS secretariat during the talks.

In doing all of this, I made it clear that ECCAS was in the lead and that our role was to support and to facilitate. The role played by the United Nations was greatly appreciated. We are also expected to actively participate in the follow-up mechanism that would be established to implement any agreement that would emanate from the Libreville talks. I will be happy to announce later that some important agreements have emanated from the talks. I understand that the moderator intends to nominate a personal representative to the Central African Republic, who would be based in Bangui, to work with us and other partners in the follow-up mechanism that would be established.

Contrary to the skepticism expressed and the insistence of the rebel groups and the political opposition that President Bozizé had lost all legitimacy to remain in office and must be removed, the peace talks commenced with all the parties at the table. The regional leaders appeared determined not to allow a rebel overrun of the Central African Republic — they made that very clear in all their interventions — and to prevent a forceful removal of a democratically elected Government, but were equally hard on President Bozizé for what they described as his lack of openness. Still, the President, backed into a corner, was forced to make a number of concessions and to make good on his promise to establish a Government of national unity.

About an hour or so ago, the summit of ECCAS Heads of State came to a close. In fact, we have just now returned from the closing ceremony. After intense negotiations, in which we were actively involved, and a number of concessions made by various parties, three agreements were signed.

The first is the declaration of principles to resolve the political and security crisis in the Central African Republic, which was signed by the Government, the politico-military movements that have adhered to the Libreville Peace Agreement, the Séléka coalition and the democratic opposition, as well as ECCAS and the follow-up committee of the Libreville Peace Agreement.

The second is the ceasefire agreement, signed by the Government and Séléka, and witnessed by ECCAS and the follow-up committee. That agreement is to come into force within 72 hours of signature.

The third is the political agreement on the politico-security situation in the Central African Republic, signed by representatives of the presidential majority, the politico-military groups parties to the Libreville Comprehensive Peace Agreement, the democratic opposition and Séléka. This agreement defines the modalities of a power -sharing and the political arrangements.

In summary, the political agreement establishes that President Bozizé shall remain in power until the end of his mandate in 2016. A Prime Minister will be appointed from the opposition, with full powers to run the Government for 12 months, renewable. An inclusive Government of national unity will be established and function for a period of 12 months, renewable, and be tasked with specific responsibilities. The Government of national unity will consist of the presidential majority, the democratic opposition, the politico-military groups that have signed the Libreville Peace Agrement, the Séléka coalition and civil society. The Government shall not be removed by the President during the transitional period. The Government of national unity will be headed by a Prime Minister who will be the Head of Government and chosen from the opposition.

The tasks that this Government will be expected to carry out during the year-long period would be to restore peace and security and to organize legislative elections after an anticipated dissolution of the National Assembly. It is expected that the National Assembly will be dissolved one year into the game and that new elections will be held.

The Government will also reorganize the security forces and the territorial administration and presumably also help expand Government authority to a greater part of the country, reform the judicial system, actively implement DDR and security sector reform with the assistance of the international community and undertake the reform of the economic and social sectors. It is also envisaged, in this arrangement, that neither the Prime Minister, the President nor members of his Cabinet will be able to run in the next election. Later, the Prime Minister, not the President, would be eligible to take part in the next presidential election.

This agreement has just be concluded. President Bozizé, in his closing remarks, invited the opposition and all the parties to return with him immediately to Bangui so that this new Government can be put in place tomorrow.

In my most recent briefing to the Council (see S/PV.6687) and in the report under consideration I signalled a marked improvement in the security situation in a large part of the Central African Republic, following the successful conduct of disarmament in the north-east and north-central regions, the beginning of the reinsertion programme in those regions and the repatriation of the Chadian rebel leader, Baba Laddé and his men. It is instructive that the north-west, even in all of this, has not been impacted by the rebel overrun. The accession of the CPJP to the Libreville Peace Agreement, on 25 August 2012, cleared the final political hurdle to the successful launch of the DDR process in the north-east. Tha was to have take place in January 2013, and was to be facilitated, and will still be facilitated, by funding for the reintegration programme provided by the European Union and the World Bank. We chose January because we needed to wait until the end of the rainy season, as that part of the country is not accessible from June to November or December because of road conditions.

Why was this new wave of rebellion launched precisely at the time that the DDR process was to restart? It will be recalled that we have been reporting on the dissent within the armed forces and deep divisions among the political leadership, which were partly engendered by rumours that the President planned to change the Constitution to remain in power beyond the end of his constitutional mandate in 2016. The rise of active rebellion may not be unconnected to the frustration of some who had nursed succession ambitions. Besides, it is clear that the DDR process in the north-east is unlikely to benefit all the fighting forces. The region is vast and sparsely populated and most of the rebel movements have within their ranks militia groups from Chad and the Sudan. Any disarmament effort in that region would require the cantonment of those forces, in a region where there is practically no Government presence, and the identification of who is Central African or foreign would be difficult. Such an exercise would only be successful through a regional approach — and we were aware of that — that involves the neighbours of the Central African Republic.

While we have been monitoring and reporting on the increasing incidence of military activities by different armed groups, including dissident groups of the CPJP and deserters of the presidential guard, we did not anticipate that an organized rebel assault on some key locations would lead to such a quick overrun of half of the country. The rebel success was more a factor, in our view, of the failure of the national security forces than of the capacity of the rebels. We are hopeful that the agreements that were signed today in Libreville will contain the immediate flair-up, calm the situation in the Central African Republic and enable us to recalibrate the disarmament process. However, we believe that a

failure to go further to discuss the reasons for the lack of implementation of previous agreements and to correct those factors may lead to another meltdown a few years down the line as a result of expectations frustrated and not met. We were comforted by the statement by the mediator to the effect that he remains engaged and that the discussions would continue to look at those fundamental issues.

Allow me to now turn to the issue of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). During the period under review, there were consistent reports of an increase in LRA activity in the south-east region of the Central African Republic. Up to the moment the report was issued, 48 presumed LRA attacks had been carried out, leading to 24 deaths and 85 abductions. There are 21,000 internally displaced persons and 2,400 refugees. In its efforts to counter the LRA threat, the Government has committed to deploy a battalion to fight the LRA, with about 350 troops actually deployed at any given time — the others will be rotated in and out — before the upsurge in conflict in the north-east. Of course, the upsurge there has completely detracted from that plan.

The coordination of monitoring activities has been enhanced with BINUCA, the Government, the African Union, the World Bank and the international LRA working group, which we established here in Bangui. The deployment of two consultants by BINUCA to the LRA-affected area, funded by the World Bank, has also greatly helped.

I would like to briefly say something about the humanitarian conditions, because I had asked our colleagues to send me the latest input on the humanitarian situation. As of today, the humanitarian conditions remain dire, as the displacement of the population fleeing their homes into the bush continues. That is why one of the provisions in the ceasefire agreements, which calls for an immediate withdrawal of the rebels from the cities, is particularly important, as that will hopefully allow people to go back home. We have registered incessant looting of the offices of humanitarian organizations and stores. The World Food Programme warehouse in Bria has been practically emptied out, the United Nations offices, including BINUCA offices in Bambari and Kaga-Bandoro have also been affected, and the UNICEF office in Kaga-Bandoro has also been looted by the rebels.

Humanitarian access has been constrained, and we estimate that 800,000 people are living in the affected areas and need emergency assistance as soon as we are able to get it to them. The difficulty now is to help create that space for us to get to them. Constrained humanitarian access due to insecurity continues to be a major challenge, and I was told that humanitarian partners want us to underline to the parties — and I have done so with my own engagement with them — the importance of respect for international humanitarian law and human rights law, including as regards immediate humanitarian access, the protection of children against recruitment into the armed forces and protection against sexual and gender-based violence. We made sure that those provisions are very clearly underlined in the ceasefire agreement.

I am pleased to note that Ms. Zainab Bangura, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, will brief the Security Council today. We were very happy to host her during the fact-finding mission that she undertook to the Central African Republic, and we have provided details of her visit. BINUCA looks forward and stands ready to work closely with her office and, of course, the entire United Nations system in the Central African Republic to implement the undertakings contained in the two memorandums she signed during her trip to the country.

In conclusion, as dramatic as the events of the past few weeks may have been, they have presented emerging opportunities to get the partners to undertake dialogue and to consult on how to pull the country back from the brink. The Council may recall that many of our reports have been replete with calls for dialogue. However, those opportunities will be lost if advantage is not taken of the opportunity to put in place an efficient an efficient and effective Government that is capable of addressing the many challenges that the country faces. I have made that very clear in our consultations with all the parties. It is not just about giving people posts, but about ensuring that we have a Government that really works. The follow up to the first Libreville Agreement, as well as the inclusive political dialogue, stalled only partly due to the lack of political will. While that is indeed true, it is also true that the Central African Republic has been an aid orphan. Many of our core activities have remained underfunded. I have in the past called for a clear investment in peace and development to prevent the Central African Republic from falling down a slippery slope. We may be on that slippery slope now.

It is also clear that BINUCA and the United Nations presences in the Central African Republic will have to re-evaluate our priorities and capacities to enable us to be more effective partners in the implementation of the agreements that have been signed and as development partners of the country. Plans for the implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration must be accompanied by robust political engagement on the ground and within the region to help enhance State authority and capacity. We need to engage more in social cohesion and local mediation. We need to more assertively push for the reform of the security sector and to work with the Bretton Woods institutions to cover post-conflict reconstruction and recovery efforts.

We intend to recommend that BINUCA lead a strategic assessment to review our priorities and to redefine our needs. The international community now needs to engage more forcefully, both diplomatically and financially, to pull the Central African Republic back from the brink. Security is fundamental to peace and development. The Central African Republic requires a functional and effective army and security forces. There is a need for a Government that can be present in all parts of the country, with appropirate capacities. BINUCA should be able to support those efforts, and civilian capacities should be built. All that will require international accompaniment and generous funding. I am happy to report that we work very closely on the ground with our partners, the United States representative, the African Union, the European Union, France and the African group of ambassadors.

The Secretary-General is paying close attention to the situation in the Central African Republic and has accorded us the same level of priority that he has accorded to Syria, Somalia and others conflicts. I count on the Council to continue to support these efforts, and thank the members of the Council for the solidarity they have shown, especially in the past few weeks, as we have tried in grapple with the current crisis.

**The President**: I thank Ms. Vogt for her briefing, and commend her for the decisions she has taken and the efforts she has made for dialogue and engagement in very difficult circumstances.

I now give the floor to Ms. Bangura.

**Ms. Bangura**: I wish to join my colleague, Special Representative of the Secretary-General Vogt, in congratulating you, Sir, on assuming the presidency of the Council for this month. I am grateful for this opportunity to deliver my first briefing to the Security Council, and wish to thank you, Mr. President, and the members of the Council, for inviting me to participate in this meeting. In the interests of time, I will summarize my statement, which has been circulated in writing.

From 5 to 13 December 2012, as Ms. Vogt noted, I visited the Central African Republic, which is the site of a long-forgotten conflict. This is one of the main reasons that I chose the Central African Republic to be the destination of my first country visit since taking office.

I wish to express my gratitude to the Government for welcoming me and for the frank and constructive discussions. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my colleague, Special Representative Margaret Vogt, and her small but dedicated team for facilitating the visit, and indeed laying the ground for the two communiqués that were its formal outcome.

The regrettable outbreak of conflict since my visit only serves to accentuate the necessity to implement some of the immediate protection commitments that are expressed in the communiqués. At this critical moment, the international community must send a strong and clear message that sexual violence is unacceptable and that those who commit, command or condone such crimes will be held to account.

Conflict-related sexual violence in the Central African Republic is a fundamental security issue that requires an operational security response. Widespread sexual violence against women is being committed by State and non-State actors alike. Such violence includes rape by armed groups in areas under their control; forced abductions of women, girls and boys into armed groups; forced marriage; and some incidents of sexual violence committed by elements of the national security forces. Widespread violations also continue to be committed by the Lord's Resistance Army.

The women I met in Bangui, Bria and Paoua told me that their paramount desire was for security, the release of women and children from armed groups, and the disarmament of combatants so that they could pick up the pieces of their lives. Our general lack of information on sexual violence paralyses action — whether it is action against the perpetrators or programmatic response for survivors. Therefore, ensuring better monitoring, analysis and information as a basis for evidence-based action is a critical priority.

In the areas under the control of armed forces and groups, the civilian population is extremely vulnerable. It is the moral and legal responsibility of all armed actors to prevent such violations. Therefore, all armed forces and groups in the Central African Republic must immediately issue clear orders prohibiting sexual violence through their respective chains of command, and undertake investigations to hold perpetrators to account.

We also know that many women and children are forcibly recruited by and directly associated with armed groups, and that they continue to suffer sexual violence in this context. Therefore, all armed groups must identify and release these women and children without further delay.

These are among the immediate protection measures that must be taken, particularly in the context of ongoing hostilities. These measures should not wait for a ceasefire or peace agreement to be concluded, because the women and children of the Central African Republic have waited for over 20 years and cannot afford to wait any longer. These protection measures must be prerequisite elements of any ceasefire agreement, and I am delighted that Special Representative of the Secretary-General Vogt has ensured this.

In my meetings with representatives of the politico-military groups, they acknowledged that there were problems. They all expressed a willingness to work with the United Nations to address sexual violence. Even at this moment of renewed conflict and a shifting political landscape, it is crucial that we hold all politico-military groups, their leaders and would-be leaders to such commitments.

I would like to recount to the Council one serious and indicative incident that occurred during my visit. In Bria, the Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix (CPJP) had agreed to release to UNICEF custody of a number of children associated with their group. The day before the handover, most of the children who had been identified were moved some 30 kilometres from the designated handover location. In the end, the child protection team was able to access only three children — one boy and two girls. In spite of having signed release documents for these three children, the CPJP cadres on the ground refused to let the two girls go. They insisted that the girls were the wives of combatants. They also assaulted a member of the child protection team. This incident goes to show that there are special challenges to secure the release of women and girls from armed groups.

Although the Government has taken a number of measures, including important legislative reforms, to address sexual violence, the capacity of national institutions to implement them is extremely limited and State authority and structures are absent in most areas outside Bangui. Where a measure of political will may exist, addressing sexual violence crimes is most often overridden by other perceived priorities and resource and structural constraints.

In carrying this mandate forward, I am placing particular emphasis on fostering national ownership, leadership and responsibility. Therefore, a primary objective of my visit was to deepen dialogue and cooperation with the Government. In addition and in accordance with the will of this Council as expressed in resolution 1960 (2010), it was essential that I engage with the leadership of the main politico-military groups in order to gain concrete protection commitments from them. Such engagement with all relevant parties to the conflict will continue to define the mode of work of my Office.

In follow-up to my visit, it is intended that the United Nations Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict will deploy to the Central African Republic. We would like this technical follow-up mission to take place by February or March of this year, but the timing will of course be contingent upon the political and security situation. The Team of Experts will re-engage the key stakeholders and support the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA) and the United Nations country team in preparing an implementation strategy and plan for the commitments under the joint communiqués.

The deployment of a women's protection adviser to BINUCA to support Special Representative of the Secretary-General Vogt in the implementation of resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1960 (2010) and the joint communiqués is critical. I urge the Security Council and Member States to support the deployment of women's protection advisers.

I will encourage the United Nations system, particularly through the United Nations Action network, to refocus on the Central African Republic in terms of advocacy, monitoring and reporting and services for survivors. There is an urgent need for greater

international focus and attention on the Central African Republic, including more sustained donor commitment for a comprehensive and integrated response to sexual and gender-based violence across the country.

As the briefing of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Vogt underscored, addressing security issues, including the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants and reform of the security sector, is the prerequisite for sustainable prevention and response to sexual violence. The state of chronic emergency impedes all aspects of humanitarian and development work in the country. However, it is my belief that, with greater focus at the highest political level and the strategic and sustained dedication of resources, it is possible to make progress. It will be crucial to ensure that any assistance provided is predicated on the Government taking national ownership and responsibility.

**The President**: I thank Ms. Bangura for her briefing and for sharing her important perspective and assessment with Council members.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Central African Republic.

**Mr. Doubane** (Central African Republic) (*spoke in French*): Like Ms. Bangura, I had prepared a speech, but given the changing situation I will deliver only the last part of what I had prepared.

Allow me at the outset to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of January. I take this opportunity to pay tribute to your predecessor, the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco. I thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2012/956) on my country, the Central African Republic, which is the subject of our meeting today. I also take this opportunity to express our thanks and friendship to Ms. Vogt, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic and her team for their tireless work to support peace and development in my country.

Since we are at the dawn of a new year, I would like to offer my best wishes to all representatives and their families.

The Central African Republic takes note of the report that has just been presented, and welcomes the progress noted therein towards bringing peace and development to my country after so many years of suffering due to multiple internal revolts and the presence of foreign insurgencies on our territory. Despite some ongoing difficulties, my country's Government is progressively establishing genuine rule of law and has made further progress since 10 December; indeed, the report of the Secretary-General has been superceded by developments on the ground.

We can say that, as of 10 December, the international community was again showing signs of fatigue. The Special Representative's video teleconference briefing reflected this fact since, for a number of days, she has been managing the situation in the Central African Republic not from Bangui as she did previously, but from Yaoundé, where she is living, since the entire delegation and all agencies have been moved to Cameroon. That is also why she introduced her report from Libreville while the talks are being held. Hence, the report has become completely obsolete since it was published.

As I was saying, the international community and the Central African people themselves are without doubt tired of this ongoing instability and insecurity, which is caused by the ready and abusive use of the gun as a means to settle the disputes and other problems that unfortunately beset my country, the Central African Republic. This is certainly an understandable attitude, but I can assure the Council here and now that the Central African people are well aware of the situation and can together say, "we have understood this and understood it well".

That is why the meeting of Heads of States of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) included a discussion on ways to resolve this latest of many crises that have affected the Central African Republic and undermined its national unity and cohesion. Everybody is now convinced that the talks in Libreville are the last lifeline for the Central African Republic because the threat of war is clear in our fragile State and among its people.

In the light of this situation, the Government favours dialogue and, like the people of the Central African Republic and the entire international community represented here, places considerable hope in the implementaiton of fair, balanced, realistic and practical solutions that will lead to lasting, even definitive peace in the Central African Republic. We thank God that the signing of the three agreements has led to some easing

of the tension. The Government is now committed, with the support of the follow-up committee to be established, to implement the recommendations, resolutions and other decisions that have emerged from the talks in the interest of peace and reconciliation between the daughters and sons of the Central African Republic.

In conclusion, my delegation would simply like to thank from the bottom of our heart all those who, despite the various challenges, have continued to support the Central African Republic in its pursuit of peace and stability, in particular States members of ECCAS, friendly countries, the African Union, the European Union, the United Nations, the International Organization of la Francophonie, international financial institutions, multilateral and bilateral partners, without forgetting national and international non-governmental organizations or simply those who, out of goodwill, have worked on the sidelines. In that connection, I would like to say that the Gabonese people, who were critical in providing hospitality to the African delegation, deserve all our thanks.

Finally, in closing, I would like to end by saying that acting to restore peace in the Central African Republic is to act in favour of the stability of the subregion and of Africa as a whole.

**The President**: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

*The meeting rose at 11 a.m.*